

From: Mary Jossem [mailto:mfjossem@gmail.com]

Sent: Friday, February 15, 2013 4:57 PM

Subject: Council Meeting Testimony in support of Bill 6 and Bill 7 (Public Safety and Economic Development)

February 15, 2013

To Members of the Public Safety and Economic Development Committee:

It was with great pleasure that I read in the morning paper that your committee is proposing regulations to ensure that all of Honolulu's residents and visitors have unimpeded access to public sidewalks and malls. Thomas Square is a microcosm for all the neighborhoods and communities in Honolulu that are gradually turning into public campground and dumping areas. This location (as are many others) is an eyesore to all who live in the area, work in the area, visit the area or even drive by the area. It is shameful that residents and visitors are discouraged from enjoying the public sidewalk and park due to the tents, furniture and rubbish that are turning the location into what appears to be a public garbage dump. And just think about what our visiting art patrons must tell everyone back home about their visit to the beautiful Honolulu Museum of Art!

Regarding the Occupiers, they are and always have been free to express their opinions, but why do they have the right to trash our local environment and become a visual blight in our community that interferes with every other person's right of quiet enjoyment? This is my community too, but I don't store my junk on public property. When I want to take a stand on an issue, I write letters, give testimony, participate in orderly and permitted demonstrations and try to work with the established system to make changes. Isn't this why we have "the rule of law" in our country?

There is no question that these distressed areas also state the case for the dire need in our community for more supports for our homeless and people with mental illness. Clearly there is no single silver bullet that will solve all of the issues at once, but we must continue to find ways to work together with community agencies in finding resources and solutions that will be a win/win for all. But at the same time, we must also respect and preserve the rights of all our residents.

Despite our State's many attempts to diversify industry in Hawaii, for now we all know who brings in most of the bacon: taxpayers and tourists. If we are to preserve the willingness of taxpayers to keep feeding the trough, and keep tourists interested in visiting our beautiful state, then we must take action to keep our communities and tourist attractions places people want to live in and visit while also working to address the needs of our most vulnerable residents.

Please support Bills 6 and 7. We need to clean up our city.

Sincerely,

Mary F. Jossem
85 Dowsett Avenue
Honolulu, HI 96817
595-2865

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